

Warm Spring and Weed Growth

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With the Spring of 2020 setting up to be much different than 2019, that means our early-season weed control may also see a different set-up. Soil moisture is adequate and soil temperatures are trending above normal, both of which are ingredients for early season weed growth. In 2019, we saw a very cool winter and spring, limiting any early-weed growth, so we should be prepared for an early arrival to weed-growing season.

Control Winter Annual Weeds in Crop Fields

The best time to control winter annual weeds, such as marestail, is in the fall, but the second best time is late-March to early-April. Make an assessment now by walking across a field to determine the weed(s) of interest and the distribution and density. These weeds are much easier to control when they are small and can be controlled by herbicides or tillage, although, tillage is a last resort. Select the best herbicide, or combination of herbicides, that can control these weeds, while providing some residual control through planting season. Herbicide recommendations can be found in Nebraska Extension's "2020



Spring marestail growth in a crop field.

Guide for Weed, Disease and Insect Management in Nebraska" (EC130).

Pasture Weed Control

The spring is an optimal time for weed control in pastures, although, there are still some weeds best controlled in the fall. Most perennial weeds and annuals are sensitive to herbicide applications during the late-spring. Herbicide applications are most effective in late-May to early-June using herbicides like Grazon or Milestone. Keep an eye on the growth of these weeds this season, as an earlier-than-normal application may be necessary.

Properly identifying weeds early in their growth stage and applying herbicides at the proper time can help keep them under control.

Prevention is Key

The easiest way to control weeds is to not have weeds at all. Preventing weeds from growing in crop fields can be done by using a mulch or cover crop to reduce the need from herbicide applications. As Paul Jasa, UNL Extension Engineer, says: "Put something there or Mother Nature will!" Keeping the ground covered from harvest to planting will help limit early-season weed growth of those winter annuals.

For your pastures, controlled

2020 Weed Guide Now Available

Nebraska Extension's "2020 Guide for Weed, Disease and Insect Management in Nebraska" (EC 130) is an excellent tool to use for pest management. This guide is written by Nebraska Extension pest management specialists and researchers. It includes information on pest management strategies, nozzle and droplet size classifications, pesticide effectiveness, resistance management, among many other topics and resources. The 2020 guide can be ordered for \$15 plus tax at <https://marketplace.unl.edu/extension/ec130.html> (print or digital PDF) or at the Extension office (print version only).



or rotational grazing and managed stocking rates are the best tools to reduce over-grazing and allow the grass to outcompete the weeds. Stocking rates in Southeast Nebraska are variable due to grass species, soil type and annual rainfall. Typically, you can target about 4 acres per cow-calf pair, if you are using standard grazing, and adjust accordingly during the season.

Soil Temperatures

Find the latest soil temperatures (taken at 4 inches below the soil) across the state at <https://cropwatch.unl.edu/soiltemperature>

Creating Capable Children

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We all know children tend to take a little (or sometimes a lot) longer when completing simple tasks such as zipping up their coat, opening a jar, or sweeping the floor. We also know it would be a lot faster to just do it for them rather than having to sit and wait until they get it done. However, that method does not develop self-sufficiency in your child. So, what approach does then?

Be Patient

When your child is trying to zip up their coat, do you wait a couple seconds and then do it for them? Or do you wait until they figure it out or actually need your help? Instead of jumping in right away, try using encouraging words like "Almost!" or "So close!" You will be able to tell when they are ready to give up. If they reach that point, try asking if they would like your help, and if so, you could put your fingers over theirs and zip it up together.



Use Examples, Not Just Words

When your child is sweeping the floor, but doing more harm than good, simply take the broom for a moment, show them how, and say, "Here, if you do it this way, you'll get the floor a lot cleaner."

Don't Plan Every Minute of Their Day

There are many benefits that come from boredom. When you plan activity after activity for your child, or give them access to a phone or similar device, they do not ever have

a chance to get bored. If they do experience boredom, they will learn to fill the time up with something by themselves. Boredom is a restless state and the brain, with practice, will find things to do to get out of it, such as daydreaming, imagining and problem solving. If your child is used to being occupied, they will grow agitated when they are not doing something and will look to you to fill their time. So make it easier on yourself and let your child be bored every once in a while.

Source: "Zero to Five" by Tracy Cutchlow

Empathy Over Sympathy

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Sometimes it can be easy to intertwine empathy and sympathy, but they do not mean the same thing nor do they lead to the same feelings. When in an emotional situation, using empathy will result in a more positive response because it means to enter into one's feelings and it leads us to a deeper understanding.

Sympathy usually sounds something like, "Well at least..." For example, let's say a mother is frustrated her son is not getting the grades she was hoping for. Her friend then proceeds to say, "Well at least your daughter is excelling in school." The friend's response does not come from a place of understanding, and in turn, does not comfort the mother. It's easier to just respond with sympathy because it does not require us to put ourselves into another's shoes.

However, with your child and partner, the best outcome will come when you use empathy. Empathy actually calms the body, and in emotional situations, having

relaxed conversations tend to lead to a better ending. In relationships, whether it is with your partner or your child, disagreements occur and there is not always a resolution because of different opinions, values, points of view, etc. If you use empathy during those conflicts, it shows you understand what they are feeling and where they are coming from, even if you don't exactly agree with it. That is why empathy is so powerful.

It is pretty simple to understand why empathy is the best response, but it is not the simplest to use instead of sympathy because it takes a conscious effort. Whether you have a newborn that will not stop crying, a toddler that is crabby because they did not have a nap or a teenager who is driving you up the wall because they are self-conscious about the changes they are going through, there is always a place for empathy.

If you have not yet, try using empathy over sympathy and watch how it changes your relationships for the better. I know it did mine.

Source: "Zero to Five" by Tracy Cutchlow